A photograph of two men in business attire (white shirts and ties) sitting in airplane seats. The man on the left is pointing at a laptop screen, and the man on the right is looking at the screen. The background shows airplane windows with a blue sky view. The image is framed by a thick purple border.

*This chapter is dedicated  
to my loving wife, Iris,  
who gave me the  
inspiration to start and  
finish this project.*

**A**s people work longer hours to compensate for the increased cost of living, higher healthcare fees and the overwhelming need for that new iPod, they sometimes forget about their other needs. The most important need, perhaps, is to take care of their bodies in order to increase the length of their lifespan. In addition to work – as if that wasn’t enough – people are busy at home, involved with cooking, cleaning, paying bills and running errands. The rest of their busy day is often taken up by travel. Where in the day is someone going to find the time to work out and get fit? The answer lies in the ability to adjust to a new lifestyle: fitness on the road. Why’s this so important? Simply put, many people in New Jersey – and America – are overweight.

Over the years, people are working longer and harder. As a result, it’s not surprising that they don’t meet their fitness and nutritional needs. Nor is it surprising that this has led the federal government to issue health warnings due to an increase in conditions such as heart disease, diabetes, and obesity. So the question arises: “What types of people does this affect and how do I maintain a healthy lifestyle on the road whether I’m gone for one day or one month?”

Those who are most susceptible to health risks are the ones who have poor eating habits and get little or no exercise. Perfect examples

are people who are on the road and remain in one place for long periods of time such as traveling salesmen, pilots, flight attendants and national and international business travelers. Ultimately, you have to diagnose yourself and plan a course of action that involves eating better and exercising more.

One of the biggest misconceptions about fitness on the road is that many people have no time for anything else but fast food. In addition, it’s often asked, “When people may have to eat at a fast-food restaurant and then drive to their destination that’s five hours away, who has the time to work out?” Another misconception is that people cannot possibly work out as a passenger in a car or in the back of an airliner during a 16-hour trip from New York to Hong Kong. Let’s dissect each of these general misconceptions and come up with some tactics for improved eating and exercising on the road.

## TACTICS FOR EATING

Frequently, people who have limited access to meaningful exercise also have limited access to quality food. Having the #4 Value Meal at a fast-food restaurant becomes second nature. When it comes to proper nutrition, you may wonder where you’re supposed to find “fitness on the road.” Did you ever see a fast-food restaurant that has a fitness facility? And no, the kid’s play area doesn’t count.

## Chapter 9

### Fitness on the Road

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**It's a privilege to be able to eat what you want, when you want and not have to stop—except to get your food.**

Today, the lifeline of many Americans doesn't revolve around getting to a fitness facility. It revolves around getting to their favorite fast-food restaurant, ordering a value meal and driving to a meeting that's two hours away. If you're unable to get to a salad bar, what can you do to make healthy eating choices on the road?

In a sense, those who spend a great deal of their time driving their cars should consider themselves lucky. For road travelers, a perfect and simple solution to the food dilemma is to buy a large lunch bag that's big enough to hold several sandwiches, fresh fruit and vegetables, and other small, nutritious items. Try to get a lunch bag that's about the size of a one-foot cube with a separate chamber for ice packs. It's a privilege to be able to eat what you want, when you want and not have to stop – except to get your food. Anyone would have the “time” for this and, above all, it's a healthy alternative to eating fast food. Another plus is that you only need to visit a supermarket to restock. You'll also find that this tactic saves you money as well since it's generally less expensive than the cost of fast food. One other point: You may want to keep the lunch bag in the trunk of your car in cooler weather. Not only is it cooler than the interior of your car, but you also have to make an effort to get to it. This way, you're not constantly eating food during your entire trip.

When shopping for food, be conscious of what you're buying. Instead of using white bread for your sandwiches, for example, try whole-wheat bread. While carbohydrates are an important nutrient, you should avoid high-sugar items such as cookies and candies. For snacks, consider making your own trail mix with peanuts, raisins and sunflower seeds.

Don't forget to keep a bottle of water with you at all times. You'll be able to hydrate your body better and faster with water than with soda. Always be prepared. The last thing that you need is to have the car air conditioner break in the middle of summer on the New Jersey Turnpike without having a supply of water to hydrate yourself.

What about people in airline travel? Pilots, flight attendants and business travelers cannot bring a lunch bag that's loaded with cold cuts for fear that they'll spoil after a few hours. Plus, there's usually too little space for a large lunch bag on an airliner. In this instance, you want to travel light: Purchase a smaller lunch bag similar to the size that children use for school. Hence, a meal-replacement bar makes a fairly perfect snack along with whole foods such as apples, oranges and grapes. These items will also last a few days without refrigeration. When traveling, one of the best food products that you can bring along is reduced-fat peanut butter. To the constant traveler, this is a gift from the heavens. Being fairly well balanced

with protein, carbohydrates and fat, it makes for a reasonably good food to maintain energy levels.

If you're staying in a hotel room and you want something more than peanut butter but the kitchen is closed for the night, there's still hope. Simply heat a can of instant pasta or rice in a microwave. If your room doesn't have a microwave, go to the hotel lobby. It's very common for hotel employees to have a microwave in their break room.

The next time that you're in a supermarket, take your time going through each food item. Come up with new ideas that you can utilize when on the road. You'll be amazed at how the food industry has changed its products to instant, hot food. Watch what you're putting into your body. If you're flying for long periods of time, try to limit your intake of sodium. This will reduce the risk of leg swelling that often occurs from sitting in one place for extended periods of time such as on a long flight. Carefully read the nutrition facts panels and make sure that the amounts you're eating are consistent with the daily recommendations for someone of your age, gender and level of activity.

Despite bringing your own food, you may feel the craving to make a fast-food run. If you find yourself at a fast-food restaurant, look closely at the menu. Get creative with your selections. Many items contain some kind of sauce, sweetener or "secret recipe" to

reel in potential customers. For instance, most chicken sandwiches are fried. But did you know that most places offer chicken that's grilled, too? Another tip is to substitute something for the sauce or "add-on" condiments. Your choice is based on your personal preferences but the point is that you do have a choice. You know what's in the lettuce, tomatoes and onions. But do you know what's in the reddish-white stuff that's under the pickle?

Over the past few years, the oil that's used to make french fries has gotten healthier. There are other things to consider, however. Most of the popular fast-food restaurants offer several sizes of french fries. At one fast-food chain, a small order of fries contains 11 grams of fat of which 2.5 grams are trans fat. And if that's not bad enough, a large order of fries contains 25 grams of fat of which 6 grams are trans fat. Moreover, the small fries have 140 milligrams of sodium and the large fries have 330 milligrams. So as you can readily see, the small size has considerably less fat and sodium (and fewer calories). Here's another tip: to lower the amount of sodium, ask them not to add salt to your order. On a positive note, none of the french fries have any cholesterol.

Most fast-food restaurants make available pamphlets on site or literature online that contain nutritional information and the ingredients of each item. Even if you only



**With the federal government presenting proactive solutions for a healthier America, more and more fast-food restaurants are offering salads.**



**You'll be able to hydrate your body better and faster with water than with soda.**

eat fast food occasionally, it's a good idea to examine this information. When you order your meal, you can use this to make an informed decision. (You may be in for a shock when you see how much fat and cholesterol you unknowingly consumed in the past!). Armed with this information, you can now regulate what you eat and have a more balanced diet.

With the federal government presenting proactive solutions for a healthier America, more and more fast-food restaurants are offering salads. To increase your protein intake, you can get salads with white-meat chicken. Try to avoid salads that are topped with fried chicken. Additionally, be very careful when using their salad dressings. Some contain as much or more fat and cholesterol as some hamburgers, not to mention a very high amount of sodium (in some cases, more than 500 milligrams per serving). A viable solution is to bring along a healthy salad dressing of your own in a prepackaged container which, incidentally, doesn't need to be refrigerated.

## **TACTICS FOR EXERCISING**

Now that you have several ideas for making better choices of food and several alternatives to "the usual," it's time to discuss the exercise aspect of fitness on the road. To start, keep in mind that a large number of hotels do have fitness centers. However, some "centers" may literally contain only one treadmill or a rusted multi-station gym where you'd be advised to get a pre-workout tetanus shot. These areas are normally good for space but often lack proper, well-maintained equipment for a safe, efficient workout. On the other hand, many hotels have constructed fairly nice fitness centers with free weights (barbells and dumbbells), a full line of single-station machines, treadmills, elliptical machines and stretching mats. If you're fortunate enough, a major franchise fitness facility may be located within walking or jogging distance of the hotel. Or you may be able to get the driver of the hotel's courtesy van to take you to a local fitness facility at no additional cost. If this is the case, take full advantage and go.

But what if the hotel doesn't have any fitness equipment to suit your needs and you can't get to a local fitness facility? Needless to say, you aren't going to travel with a motorized treadmill strapped onto the roof of your car or a full set of iron dumbbells stuffed into your carry-on luggage. The solution? A wide assortment of compact and



portable devices is available for travelers. In some way or another, you can fit many of these into your suitcase with ease.

One product that you're sure to find useful is a simple piece of rubber tubing known as a "resistance band." If the resistance is meaningful and the device is used properly, it can be a reasonably effective means of strength training. There are several different types of resistance bands. One popular type is a basic rubber line with two handles at each end. Usually, you can get a band in one of three main levels of resistance: light, medium or heavy. These are the most common because they allow you to do many different exercises. The second system is similar but has a handle on one side and a velcro strap on the other. Securing the strap around your ankle or foot enables you to exercise numerous muscles including your outer hip, shoulders and arms. You can purchase these systems separately or in kits from most sporting-goods stores. The prices range from about \$10 per band to as much as \$40 for a kit, depending on the resistance and brand. With so many options, you should consider all of the possibilities.

Another inexpensive and easy-to-use item is a squeezable ball – or something similar – that you can use to work the many muscles that are located in your fingers, hands and forearms. "Grip balls" are sold at most sporting-goods stores with prices that start as low as about \$5. A racquetball also works

very well. Or you can make a squeeze ball that's very effective and inexpensive by taking a large, thick balloon and filling it with wet sand. Something like this is also small enough to fit into your pocket.

A relatively new wrinkle to fitness on the road is the use of water weights. These dumbbell-like objects can be filled with water and used virtually anywhere. And after draining the water, they pack easily, too. The "dumbbells" don't need to be filled to the brim to work. But when they are, they can weigh as much as 16 pounds. You should adjust them as needed to get the desired amount of weight. The price per pair is around \$50.

What about contingencies for aerobic training? The ever-popular jump rope fits anywhere and, thus, is portable. It can be used in any hotel room (although you'll need to take into consideration the fact that there may be people in the room below you). An inexpensive jump rope costs about \$2; more expensive ones are as much as \$20 or more. The price is affected by differences in the composition of the rope (usually rubber, fiber or leather) and the makeup of the handles (some have ball bearings). Generally, the most expensive ropes offer the best performance. If possible, try it out in the store. One of the drawbacks is that you must be fairly skilled at jumping rope in order for it to be an effective aerobic activity.





**Chest Press**



**Overhead Press**

Here are a few other tips: Instead of parking at the closest spot, leave your car farther away and walk. While this certainly isn't enough to promote an improvement in your aerobic fitness, any extra walking that you do will use more calories than you normally would. Another application of this can be done in an airport terminal. Waiting for a flight? Take a walk down the entire concourse. This could make up for at least some of the exercise that you missed on the treadmill. Another tip is to take the stairs instead of the elevator or escalator. Important note: Make sure that you wear comfortable shoes.

By using all of the aforementioned products and tactics, you'll have the ability to exercise in what you might have thought were unlikely places.

## Exercises

Before you begin your exercises, stretch out your entire body. Even if you're not working every muscle group, it's still a good idea to stretch, particularly if you haven't done so in a while. Stretch as far as you can and hold each position for about 30 seconds. Make sure that you don't bounce into or out of the stretch and always remember to breathe naturally during the stretch as you would during any exercise.

When you work out, it's very important that you don't overexert yourself – especially if you're exercising alone. Always start with

the light-level resistance bands. As you improve your muscular strength, you should progress to heavier bands. But if you cannot use the next level of resistance with good technique, go back to the lighter bands. Likewise, if you cannot do more than about 8-12 repetitions, do what you feel is reasonable and safe. You're responsible for monitoring your own body.

It's well beyond the scope of this chapter to discuss an extensive array of exercises in great detail. However, what follows are brief descriptions of several basic yet productive exercises that you can do using either a resistance band or your bodyweight. As you become more experienced, you'll be able to come up with other exercises on your own. Remember, you're only limited by your imagination.

## CHEST PRESS

Muscles used: chest, shoulders and triceps

- **Secure the band around something that won't move such as a bedpost.**
- **Grasp the handle with your right hand and position it below your shoulder.**
- **Push your right hand forward.**
- **Repeat the exercise with the left side of your body.**
- **A good thing about this exercise is that you can easily change the load on your muscles by merely moving your feet forward or backward.**

### OVERHEAD PRESS

Muscles used: shoulders and triceps

- Stand on the middle of the band and grasp a handle in each hand.
- Push your right hand overhead.
- Repeat the exercise with the left side of your body.
- As you become more comfortable in performing the exercise slowly and deliberately, you can use two arms at the same time.

### SIDE RAISE

Muscles used: shoulders

- Stand on the middle of the band and grasp a handle in each hand.
- Keep your arms fairly straight and raise both hands to the side.
- Using both arms at the same time makes it easier for you to maintain your balance and enables you to keep your back straight.

### BICEP CURL

Muscles used: biceps and forearms

- Stand on the middle of the band and grasp a handle in each hand.
- Pull your right hand to the front part of your shoulders by bending your arm.
- Repeat the exercise with your left arm.
- As you become more comfortable in

performing the exercise slowly and deliberately, you can use two arms at the same time.

### TRICEP EXTENSION

Muscles used: triceps

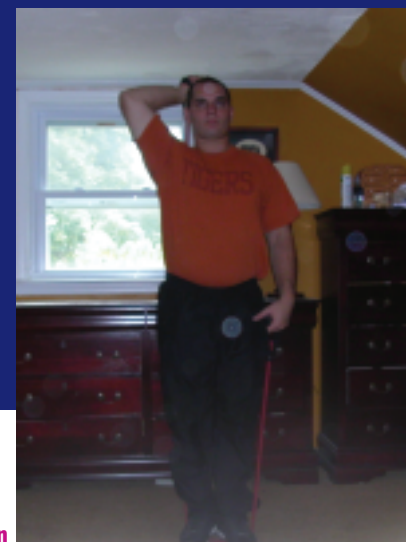
- Stand on the middle of the band and grasp a handle in each hand.
- Position your left hand behind your head.
- Extend your left hand overhead.
- Repeat the exercise with your right arm.
- As you become more comfortable in performing the exercise slowly and deliberately, you can use two arms at the same time.



Side Raise

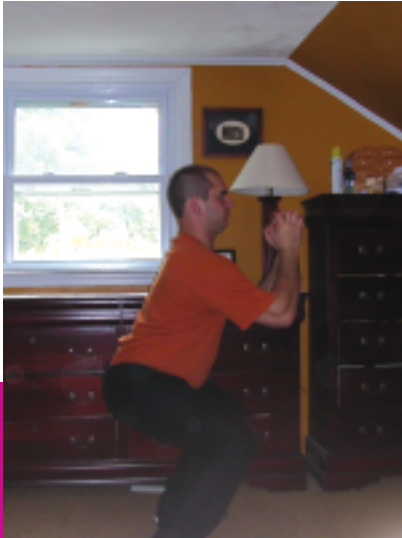


Bicep Curl



Tricep Extension





Squat



Calf Raise

## SQUAT

Muscles used: hips, quadriceps and hamstrings

- **Position your hands in front of you and interlace your fingers.**
- **Lower your hips slowly by bending your legs. Go to the point where your upper legs are roughly parallel to the floor, taking a full 10 seconds to get to this position.**
- **Stand up slowly by straightening your legs, again taking a full 10 seconds to do this.**
- **The reason for this very slow speed of movement is because your hips and legs are so strong. You should feel your muscles “burn” by your second or third repetition.**

## CALF RAISE

Muscles used: calves

- **Find a flight of stairs and position the balls of your feet on the bottom step so that your heels hang over the edge.**
- **Without moving the balls of your feet, drop your heels to get a good stretch.**
- **Rise up on your toes as high as possible.**
- **Do one repetition on the first step, move to the second step and repeat the process. This time, however, do two repetitions on**

**the second step. Then, move to the third step and do three repetitions. You get the idea. Continue doing this on as many steps as possible. So if you do 10 steps in this manner, you’ll have performed 55 repetitions. Doing the exercise on a flight of stairs as described here gives you a concrete goal (no pun intended). And when you move to the next step, you’ll give your muscles a momentary break.**

Although you aren’t in a commercial fitness facility, doing these workouts can seem as if you are. To keep your heart rate high, try not to rest too long between exercises. Never do more than you can handle and stop if you experience any pain or discomfort. Employing the tactics that have been discussed will help you with your goal of maintaining fitness on the road.

